



ARCHDIOCESE OF CINCINNATI

Office of the Archbishop

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Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

The Archdiocese of Cincinnati will be taking up The Catholic Relief Services Collection on April 22 and 23. The Collection supports six Catholic agencies that prioritize the family and protect the life and dignity of each person. (Catholic Relief Services, Migration and Refugee Services, Catholic Legal Immigration Network, Inc., Secretariat for Cultural Diversity in the Church, Department of Justice, Peace, and Human Development, and the Holy Father's Relief Fund). Your support of this collection helps victims of war and natural disasters receive emergency assistance; assists migrants and refugees who need housing, education, and specialized immigration legal assistance; and supports travelers and people whose livelihoods require special pastoral support and access to the sacraments.

Seafarers from around the world sail into the busy ports along the Gulf of Mexico. Because of language barriers, unfamiliarity with the location, and quarantine restrictions due to the COVID-19 pandemic, they have special material and pastoral needs. Fortunately, volunteers from the Stella Maris ministry welcome sailors entering the ports at Point Comfort, Texas, and Mobile, Alabama. Port chaplains celebrate Mass aboard ships, and lay volunteers distribute care packages and Christmas gifts to the sailors, including Bibles, rosaries, and other devotional items. In addition to serving seafarers with visits, gifts, and spiritual support, the centers in Mobile and Point Comfort organized free COVID-19 vaccination clinics for the crews. In 2021, the center at Point Comfort visited 30 ships and gave 268 vaccines to sailors from 22 different nations, while the Mobile center cooperated with local businesses, government agencies, and a Baptist-run ministry to arrange vaccinations for 1,200 sailors.

Stella Maris was founded in 1920 to bring the Church's saving message aboard ships. Over the past century, it has grown into a worldwide ministry to seafarers, port workers, cruise ship passengers, and others associated with the maritime industry. The U.S. national office is a ministry of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops' Subcommittee on Pastoral Care for Migrants, Refugees and Travelers, which The Catholic Relief Services Collection supports. When you contribute to the collection, you support this special ministry that welcomes and provides for seafarers who are far from home. As one ship captain said of Mobile's Stella Maris ministry, "You not only provide items that all require and have trouble obtaining due to the pandemic, but you remind them that someone is thinking about them."

Your support of this collection makes a difference for so many around the globe. Please prayerfully consider how you can support the collection this year. To learn more about the collection and the people who benefit, please visit www.usccb.org/catholic-relief.

Thank you for your generous support of The Catholic Relief Services Collection.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Most Reverend Dennis M. Schnurr
Archbishop of Cincinnati

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